

Sūrah Tīn

Central Theme, Relationship with Previous *Sūrah* and Sequence of Discourse

The central theme of this *sūrah* is to validate reward and punishment. The *sūrah* begins with a mention of the important places of this world where prophets of God were sent. This mention is in the form of oaths. Qur'ānic oaths, we know, are meant to bear witness to a premise. Here this premise is that man has been created in the best of moulds, with the finest of natures and with outstanding qualities. However, the law of the Almighty for a man to remain at such excellence and to strengthen his qualities is that those who embrace faith and do righteous deeds and bear every hardship they encounter in the cause of God, they will receive a great reward for their efforts. As far as those people are concerned who, because of their egotism and slackness, do not exercise strength and courage to surmount the difficulties they face in the cause of God, the Almighty will leave them to wander on the path they have adopted and in the end they would fall in a pit which is destined for such people.

Here it would be useful if readers take a look at my explanation of verses 92:5-7 and 94:5 of the last two paired-*sūrahs*.¹ These verses also discuss the same subject as is discussed in this *sūrah*. This study will also further elaborate the relationship between the preceding and succeeding *sūrahs*.

At the end of this *sūrah*, it is stated that this dealing of God with His servants is based right on truth and justice. If He does not do so, then this would mean that the righteous and the evil doers are equal in His eyes. This of course is evidently incorrect. The God who has given a person the awareness between good and evil should be the foremost to distinguish good from evil and should deal with each in a manner it is worthy of.

Further down, Sūrah 'Āṣr also discusses this subject. If it is kept in consideration, it will be easier to ascertain the stress of this *sūrah* as well:

وَالْعَصْرِ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالْحَقِّ

1. There seems to be an obvious omission here. As per Iṣlāhī's own scheme *sūrahs* 92 (Alam Nashrah) and 93 (Duḥā) form a pair and not *sūrahs* 92 (Alam Nashrah) and 94 (Layl). (Translator)

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (١٠٣: ١-٣)

Time bears witness that man is in a state of loss except those who embraced faith and did righteous deeds and urged one another to the truth and urged one another to patience. (103:1-3)

Text and Translation

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ (١) وَطُورِ سِينِينَ (٢) وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ (٣) لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ (٤) ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ (٥) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ (٦) فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ (٧) أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ (٨)

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Ever Merciful.

The mount of Figs and the mount of Olives and the mount of Sinai and this peaceful city bear witness. (1-3)

That We have created man in the finest of moulds. Then We reverted him to the lowest position when he himself wanted to become low. Except those who embraced faith and did righteous deeds. So, for them shall be a reward unending. (4-6)

Now what is it on the basis of which you deny the Day of Judgement? Is not God the greatest of Judges? (7-8)

Explanation

وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ (١)²

The word وَ here signifies an oath. I have explained at various places in this exegesis that oaths sworn by various objects and places in the Qur'ān are meant to bear witness to a premise which is stated after the oath. Our exegetes have erroneously concluded that the word اللَّيْنِ signifies the fig which is of course a dry-fruit. On the contrary, it refers to the mount of Figs which is a famous source for producing figs. The relevant portion of the research conducted by Imām Farāhī in his *tafsīr* on this word is reproduced below:³

تَيْنِ is the name of a specific mountain on which figs are produced in abundance and hence it came to be known by this name. The Arabs knew it by this name. Naming objects in such a manner was very

2. The mount of Figs and the mount of Olives bear witness.

3. Farāhī, *Majmū'ah Tafāsīr*, 2nd ed. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1998), 311.

common among them. They would name a place after something which was produced in abundance in it. Places are called by the names شجرة ، غضى and نخلة for this very reason ...

Nābighah Dhubyānī has mentioned the word تَيْن in his couplets as the name of a place:

صُهَبَ الضَّلَالِ أَتَيْنَ التَّيْنَ عَنْ عُرْضِ
يُزْجِنُ غَيْمًا قَلِيلًا مَاءُهُ شَيْمًا

Here by the word fig, he has referred to a mountain in the south. Some people say that this mountain is between Ḥalwān and Ḥamdān.

Further down, while negating certain conjectures about this word, he presents his definite opinion in the following words:⁴

It is evident from this that تَيْن either implies the mount of Jūdī or some other mountain near it. It is mentioned in the Torah that after the great flood in the time of Noah (sws) it was this place from where mankind scattered to various places and it is evident from the Qur'ān that this incident took place near the mount Jūdī.

Similarly, the word زيتون does not signify the olive or the tree which produces this fruit, as has been understood by our exegetes: It refers to the mount of Olives which is famous for being the centre of Jesus' (sws) preaching and worship. It is mentioned in the Gospels very frequently. Imām Farāhī writes:⁵

In my opinion, this is also the name of a site. Since olives were produced in abundance at this place, the Arabs named it so. We have already referred to this customary practice of theirs. It is indeed the same mountain which is frequently mentioned in the Gospels. Jesus (sws) would go there to worship and supplicate before the Almighty. It is mentioned thus in the Gospel according to Luke:

And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. (21:37)

This opinion is also corroborated by early authorities. Ibn 'Abbās

4. Ibid., 312.

5. Ibid.

(rta) and Ka‘b (rta) say that olives refers to the Bayt al-Maqdis and Qatādah says that by olives is meant the mountain where the Bayt al-Maqdis is situated.

وَطُورِ سَيْنِينَ (٢) وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ (٣)^٦

It is obvious that the “mount” of Sinai and “this secure city” refer to certain places. However, while presenting his research on the word سَيْنِينَ which was actually سَيْنَا, Imām Farāhī writes:⁷

At one place in the Qur’ān, occur the words سَيْنَا طُور (٢٠ : ٢٣). In other words, at one place it is in the feminine gender and at another, plural (جمع سالم). This is similar to the Arabic أَجْمَعُونَ and جَمْعًا. In the Hebrew Torah, at some places we find سَيْنَا and at others سَيْنِيم and it is known that suffix يُم is an indication for a plural noun.

The expression الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ obviously refers to Makkah. However, the question does arise that why was this name not directly taken and why was it mentioned in the form of an attribute. We shall answer this question later when the relationship between the objects of oath (*muqsam bihī*) and the complement of oath (*muqsam ‘alayh*) shall be explained.

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ (٤) ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ (٥) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ (٦)^٨

These verses mention the premise which is validated by the oaths sworn in the previous verses. The Almighty has indeed created man in the finest of moulds and His law and practice is that those who value this favour and strengthen their innate guidance and then after accepting the call of the messengers of God profess faith and do righteous deeds are blessed with eternal reward by Him. However, those who do not value this innate guidance are deprived of faith and righteous deeds and shall be thrown by the Almighty in the very pit from which He wanted to save them by bestowing this favour on them.

6. And the mount of Sinai and this peaceful city bear witness.

7. Farāhī, *Majmū‘ah Tafāsīr*, 312-313. We have already explained in this *tafsīr* that in Arabic, a plural noun, at times denotes its vastness of size. It seem that this same usage also exists in Hebrew.

8. That We have created man in the finest of moulds. Then We reverted him to the lowest [position] when he himself wanted to become low. Except those who accepted faith and did righteous deeds. For them shall be a reward unending.

The literal meaning of the word تَقْوِيمٌ is to straighten something, for example if it is said: قَوْمْتُ الرُّمَحَ فَاسْتَقَامَ it would mean “when I straightened the spear, it straightened”. From this primary meaning, this word came to imply “making something apt and suitable for a certain purpose.”

At many places in the Qur’ān, it is said that man has not been created without a purpose. He has been created for a great purpose (بِالْحَقِّ). This purpose is that man should lead a life in this world which is a place of trial whilst shielding himself from the lures of Satan and his agents and remain on the straight path to which he has been guided by God. If he does so, the Almighty will grant him an eternal kingdom and if he deviates from this straight path by being lured away by Satan or by being intimidated by him, then the Almighty will let him wander in the abyss of destruction that he chose for himself. The Almighty has created man in the finest of moulds keeping in view this purpose. His external appearance and structure also show that he is the best of God’s creation and his innate qualities also are so great that amongst the creation of this world only he was considered worthy of them. In the previous *sūrahs*, it is mentioned in various styles that he has been blessed with the awareness of good and evil. It is also mentioned that by nature he has a liking for good and an abhorrence for evil. It is also indicated at various places that he is blessed with intellect and intention and is not deprived of them like other creatures. All this bears evidence that he has been bestowed with all the essential qualities to fulfill the purpose for which he has been created.

The sentence ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ (then We reverted him to the lowest [position] when he himself wanted to become low) is a reference to a law and practice of the Almighty regarding human beings. Since man has been given the freedom to exercise his intention and will, it depends upon his own attitude whether he remains the best of God’s creation or reverts to a lowly state. If he values and honours his position as the best of God’s creation, the Almighty helps him rise even higher and if he does not do so and lapses into lowliness, then the Almighty too propels him into humiliation and the end result is that he falls into the pit of Hell depriving himself of all the favours of God.

The word أَسْفَلَ is an adverb of place (ظرف) and the word سَافِلِينَ is an accusative of state (حال) from the accusative pronoun in رَدَدْنَاهُ. It is evident from this syntactical analysis that the Almighty plunges a person into disgrace because that person is inclined to it and does not have the determination to achieve the higher ideals of life.

A question can arise here: The word سَافِلِينَ is plural; how can it be regarded as an accusative of state from a pronoun which is singular? The answer to this question is that though the pronoun is singular, it refers to

al-insān which refers to a genre and hence is effectively plural. Consequently, both singular and plural pronouns are used for it in the Qur'ān.

The exception stated in the sentence *إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ* actually depicts the qualities of people who are protected by the Almighty from this disgrace: those who value and honour themselves as the best of God's creation and are blessed with faith and the urge to do righteous deeds are not humiliated by God; on the contrary, they are given honour and respect and are blessed with eternal reward in an eternal life by Him.

We have already explained the meaning of the expression *غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ* at some place in this *tafsīr*. It refers to something ceaseless and unending. Some people have interpreted it in a different way; however, this is against the grammatical principles of Arabic.

After ascertaining the real claim, let us now see how the previously mentioned oaths bear evidence to it.

The Evidence borne by the Mount of Figs on Retribution

The first object sworn by is the mount of Figs and it has been reasoned out earlier that it refers to the mount of Jūdī. Two important incidents which depict the Almighty's law of retribution took place on it and their details are found in ancient scriptures: the incident involving Adam (sws) and the incident involving Noah (sws) and his people. While describing the first of these, Imām Farāhī writes:⁹

The mounts of Figs is the first place in which the first instance of worldly retribution from the Almighty took place. The details of this incident are that when Adam (sws) forgot his covenant with God and ate the fruit of the forbidden tree after being lured by Satan, his envious enemy, he and his wife were faced with the Almighty's law of retribution. They were deprived of the success they had been blessed with by the Almighty and were divested of their apparel of Paradise ... this whole incident was regarded to be a memorable one for all their progeny. Consequently, mankind has been reminded of it in various places of the Qur'ān in this capacity: *يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا* (۲۷:۷) (Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you the way he had had your parents turned out of Paradise stripping them of their garments, (7:27)).

Here, it should also be kept in consideration that it is mentioned in

9. Farāhī, *Majmū'ah Tafāṣīr*, 314.

the Torah that once Adam and Eve were divested of their apparel in Paradise, the leaves of the tree with which they covered their bodies was the fig tree.

After this incident is mentioned in the Qur'ān, it is stated that both Adam and Eve repented and the Almighty accepted their repentance and promised to reveal guidance to them and to reward those who would follow this guidance. After the first covenant, this was the second which the Almighty took from Adam. It is evident from this that the incident which took place on the mount of Figs has two aspects in it: In it, on the one hand, the Almighty deprived Adam of one of His favours and blessed him with another great favour. He was deprived of the first favour because he had forgotten his promise with God and blessed them with another because he realized his folly and repented before God.

The second incident of retribution that took place near the mount of Figs happened in the time of Noah (sws). Imām Farāhī has explained it thus:¹⁰

In his times, the Almighty destroyed the wrongdoers near this mountain and saved the righteous from the flood and blessed them. The Qur'ān says:

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكِ وَيَا سَّمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ عَلَى
الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْداً لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٤٤:١١)

And it was commanded: “Earth, absorb your waters. Heavens, cease your rain!” The water went down and the matter was concluded and the ark came to rest upon al-Jūdī, and it was declared: “Destruction for the evil-doers.” (11:44)

Later, in response to Noah's prayer, he was directed thus:

قِيلَ يَا نُوحُ اهْبِطْ بِسَلَامٍ مِنَّا وَبَرَكَاتٍ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى أُمَمٍ مِّمَّنْ مَعَكَ وَأُمَّمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمْ
ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُمْ مِنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (٤٨:١١)

It was said: “Noah disembark with peace from Us and Our blessings are upon you and on the nations which are with you. And besides yours there shall be other nations also which We will allow to flourish for sometime. Then our deadly torment will seize them.” (11:48)

10. Ibid., 314-315.

... It is evident from this that the mount of Figs is an important place where the law of retribution of the Almighty manifested itself.

The Evidence borne by the Mount of Olives on Retribution

The details of the incident which took place on the mount of Olives are presented thus by Imām Farāhī:¹¹

It was on this mountain that the Almighty took away His *sharīah* from the Jews and gave it to the other branch of the progeny of Abraham (sws). This incident took place in the final years of Jesus (sws). It is evident from its details which are mentioned in the Gospels that one day he pleaded and beseeched God all night that the ship of his people (the Jews) be saved from being drowned. However, the judgement of fate was unassailable. Finally, he lost all hope in the future of his people specially when he came to know that the Jews were after his life. This hurt him even more because he knew that if they tried to kill him, they would be cursed by God in accordance with His law and He would take away His trust from them and give to some others. The Bible records:

Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes.’”

This is a statement from the Psalms (118:22-23). Jesus (sws), while referring to it, explained it thus:

Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed. (Matthew 21:43-44)

The Jews were divested of their Heavenly Kingdom at the mount of Figs. The Gospels have recorded this incident in detail.

The Evidence borne by the Mount Sinai on Retribution

While explaining the evidence borne by the mount of Sinai, Imām Farāhī writes:¹²

The nature of the evidence borne by the mount of Sinai is very

11. Ibid., 315.

12. Ibid., 319-320.

evident. It is at this place that the Almighty turned in mercy to a very oppressed nation and as a reward for their patience delivered it from the clutches of its enemy and then later blessed it with a *sharī'ah* which was a torment and punishment for their enemies and for those who had denied the truth. This incident is a very clear example of God showering His favours on the oppressed and of His punishing the wrongdoers. References to this can be seen in the Qur'ān where the incident of the Pharaoh and his people and Moses (sws) is mentioned. For example:

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَآئِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ
فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ (١٣٧:٧)

And thus was your Lord's gracious promise fulfilled for the Israelites because they showed perseverance and We destroyed the buildings the Pharaoh and his people used to make a well as their orchards. (7:137)

Imām Farāhī has dealt at length with the details of this oath and I have contented myself on brief excerpts from it. Those interested in the details should consult his exegesis

The Evidence borne by the Secure City

The words "secure city" obviously refer to Makkah because the Almighty has made it safe and secure. Thus it is said about it: وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ (and whoever enters it is safe, (3:97)). When Abraham (sws) had migrated to it with his people who were pagans, it was uninhabited and unsecure. Abraham (sws) prayed to the Almighty to bless it with sustenance and peace which He accepted. As a result, the area became abundant in sustenance and food and it also became a sanctuary of peace. The Qur'ān thus said: فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ (so, they should worship the Lord of this House who fed them in hunger and provided them with peace in fear, (106:3-4)). This favour was bestowed upon Abraham (sws) for the sacrifices he gave and the bravery he displayed for the cause of monotheism. Later when he succeeded in an even greater trial – the trial of sacrificing his son – the Almighty blessed him with an even greater favour: the leadership of other nations of the world. At that time, Abraham (sws) had asked the Almighty if this reward of leadership would also be received by his progeny. The Almighty had replied that this promise of his does not relate to people who are incriminated with

polytheism and disbelief and thus wrong their souls. The implication was that the reward received by Abraham (sws) was because of his valour and faithfulness and only those of his descendents would have a share in this reward who follow his ways. Those who would deviate from his ways will meet the same fate which such people are destined to meet as per the law of retribution of the Almighty. The Qur'ān says:

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ (٢: ١٢٤)

And recall when Abraham was put to trial by His Lord in a few things and he fulfilled them. He said: "I will appoint you the leader of mankind." "And from my descendants also?" asked Abraham. "My promise will not apply to those who wrong their souls." (2:124)

It is evident from these details that not only is this place a witness to the Almighty's law of retribution, the Almighty has also made a proclamation from this place of His practice that who would be regarded worthy of His blessings and who would face His wrath and anger.

A question does arise here about the sequence in which these places are mentioned. Imām Farāhī answers this question thus:¹³

The sequence adopted here is based on the principle of similarity. First the incident involving Adam (sws) is mentioned because it historically precedes everything. Then Jesus (sws) is mentioned because of the similarity which exists between Adam (sws) and Jesus (sws) and which the Qur'ān has clearly referred to in the following words: (Jesus is like Adam in the sight of God, (3:59)) ... after this are mentioned two places which relate to Moses (sws) and Muḥammad (sws) and the similarity which exists between these two messengers of God is also obvious from the Qur'ān. Consequently, after addressing the Quraysh, it says:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا (٧٣: ١٥)

To you We have sent forth a Messenger as a witness upon you just as we sent a Messenger to the Pharaoh. (73:15)

In the Torah, this similarity is also evident in the prediction of the advent of Muḥammad (sws):

13. Ibid., 326.

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put My words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to My words that the prophet speaks in My name, I myself will call him to account. (Deuteronomy, 18:18-19)

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ (٧) أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ (٨)¹⁴

Imām Farāhī has interpreted the verse فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالذِّينِ in the following way:¹⁵

There are two opinions regarding the interpretation of this verse:

First: O man! What is that belies you in the matter of retribution after all these clear testimonies. Mujāhid has adopted this view. When he was asked that the addressee of this verse is Muḥammad (sws), he replied: “God forbid, how is this possible; it addresses mankind.” Zamakhasharī is also of this opinion; however, he regards the word تَكْذِيبُ in يُكَذِّبُكَ to mean حَمَلَ عَلَى التَّكْذِيبِ (to induce someone to deny). If this meaning is proven in this word, then this interpretation is very clear. However, he has not presented any corroboratory evidence for this meaning.

Second: O Prophet! What is that belies you about retribution. Farrā’ is of this opinion. In this interpretation. the words are understood to have their conventional meanings and there is no deviation in this regard; however, a little deliberation shows that context and placement do not accept this interpretation. Firstly, one fails to understand the reason for which the Prophet (sws) has been addressed by way of interrogative sentences. Secondly, the emphasis in فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ and the stress in بَعْدُ is totally lost if this interpretation is accepted. The interpretation adopted by Mujāhid is closer to the context. The word is interpreted in its conventional meaning and two solid interpretations result as per the two meanings of the word:

First, O Man! After these testimonies and arguments, what is the testimony that belies your belief about reward and punishment. In this case, the addressee of the verse is man and those who believe in

14. Now what is it on the basis of which you deny the Day of Judgement? Is not Allah the greatest of Judges?

15. Farāhī, *Majmū‘ah Tafāsīr*, 331-332.

reward and punishment will be strengthened by these words and those who are hesitant about reward and punishment will be induced to reflect on it.

One also needs to deliberate on the effective use of the interrogative particle مَا. It indicates the fact that man has always adopted the path of denial because of blind following and stubbornness. He finds no arguments to support him in this matter. There is not a single thing from among this whole world of arguments and reasoning which can negate reward and punishment. Thus man is asked to deliberate on facts and give up the attitude of blind following and see if there is even a single thing which is negating the belief of reward and punishment.

Second, after the evidence of these incidents and arguments what are the superstitions and desires which are deceiving mankind about reward and punishment.

In this case, the address would be directed at the rejecters. There are many examples in the Qur'ān of such an address. For example:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ رَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمَ (٨٢: ٦)

Man! What is it that has deceived you about your munificent Lord.
(82:6)

Imām Farāhī explains the purport of both these interrogative sentences thus:¹⁶

The purport of the first interrogative sentence in the case of both interpretations is: After a delineation of so many arguments in favour of reward and punishment, man should affirm his belief in it and should protect himself from doubts which arise within him or are raised by others in this matter.

The purport of the second interrogative sentence is that people should acknowledge reward and punishment because they are a corollary of the attributed of the Almighty. Thus what is meant to be conveyed is: Is not the Almighty the greatest of rulers? Then how is it possible that He will leave man without taking account from him and not discriminate between the righteous among them from the evil: (أَفَتَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْمُجْرِمِينَ مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ (٦٨: ٣٥-٣٦) (Are

16. Ibid., 332.

We to regard the obedient and the evil-doers to be equal. What has come over you? What is this judgement you make?

It needs to be kept in consideration that the special feature of man being created in the finest of moulds – as stated in the earlier verses – is that he has been blessed with the awareness of good and evil and he likes justice and dislikes injustice. An obvious requirement of this is that liking justice and disliking injustice should be found to the ultimate extent in the Almighty – who is the Creator of man. Then it becomes evident from this that this attribute of the Almighty makes it incumbent upon Him that He should bring a day in which He justly decides the outcome of deeds of His creation and that as a result He reward the righteous and punish the wicked. If He does not do this, then He is not أَحْكَمُ الْحَاكِمِينَ (the greatest of all judges) even though He obviously is; one cannot reject this attribute of His.

A greater part of the *tafsīr* of this *sūrah* just presented has been adapted from Imām Farāhī's Arabic *tafsīr* of this *sūrah*. At times I have elaborated his views a little more and at others I have summarized them. By the grace of God, I have come to the end of this *tafsīr* now.

فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى فَضْلِهِ وَإِحْسَانِهِ (so gratitude be to God for His blessings and favours).

Lahore,

24th February, 1980

7th Rabī' al-Thānī, 1400 AH